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Message Text

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13
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SCCT-01 /070 W
---------- 113543
P R 130944Z AUG 76
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2642
INFO AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS, PFOR, IS, TU
SUBJECT: ISRAELI REACTION TO ISTANBUL ATTACK

REF: ISTANBUL 3109

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: THE REACTION IN ISRAEL TO THE AUGUST 11 IS-
TANBUL AIRPORT ATTACK HAS PREDICTABLY BEEN ONE OF OUTRAGE.
THERE HAVE BEEN RENEWED CALLS FOR INTERNATIONAL ACTION AGAINST
TERRORISTS AND FOR RECOGNITION OF THE PLO AND ALL ITS COMPONENTS AS
AN ORGANIZATION DEVOTED TO SENSELESS MURDERS. PARTICULAR ATTENTION
HAS BEEN PAID TO THE ROLE OF LIBYA AND TO THE FACT THAT THE STRUGGLE
AGAINST TERRORISM WILL BE A LONG ONE. THERE HAS BEEN GENERAL
SATISFACTION WITH THE REACTION OF THE TURKISH AUTHORITIES; FOR
EXAMPLE, MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL AVINERI SAID TO US THAT "THE
TURKS REACTED WELL" AND DID WHAT HAD TO BE DONE. END SUMMARY

2. PRIME MINISTER RABIN TOUCHED ON MOST OF THESE POINTS
IN A STATEMENT MADE AUGUST 12 DURING A VISIT TO BORDER POLICE
UNITS. ACCORDING TO THE TEXT OF A BULLETIN ISSUED BY THE
GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE, HE SAID: "I WANT TO REPEAT WHAT
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I SAID ON 4 JULY, AFTER THE SUCCESS OF THE ENTEBBE OPERATION:

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WE HAVE WON ONE BATTLE, BUT THE WAR IS CONTINUING, I HAVE
NO DOUBT THAT TERRORIST GROUPS, SUPPORTED BY ARAB COUNTRIES
AND INDIFFERENCE AND NEGLIGENCE IN OTHER COUNTRIES, WILL
MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO CONTINUE THEIR ACTIVITIES. THIS TIME,
IN MY ESTIMATE, THE OBJECTIVE WAS MURDER, NOT A HIJACKING
FOR BARGAINING PURPOSES. IT MUST BE REMEMBERED THAT ATTACKS
CARRIED OUT FOR BARGAINING PURPOSES ARE ONLY A MEANS TO ENSURE
THE CONTINUITY OF THAT OTHER TYPE OF ATTACK, MOUNTED WITH THE
SOLE OBJECTIVE OF MURDERING ISRAELIS. ATTACKS FOR BARGAINING
PURPOSES ARE INTENDED TO GIVE REASSURANCE TO THOSE WHO SET OUT
ON MURDER MISSIONS: IF AND WHEN THEY ARE CAUGHT, THERE ARE
THOSE WHO WILL SEE TO THEIR RELEASE...

3. "THIS TIME, THE PURPOSE WAS MURDER. CONSIDERING WHAT THEY
MIGHT HAVE ACHIEVED IN ISTANBUL, THEY GAINED COMPARATIVELY
LITTLE. I WOULD SAY THE OPERATION FAILED, ALTHOUGH THERE ARE
SOME WOUNDED AMONG THOSE WHO WERE ABOUT TO BOARD AN EL AL
PLANE. IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT THIS TIME, THE TACTICS RESEMBLED
TO SOME EXTENT THOSE EMPLOYED AT ATHENS: THE TERRORISTS TIMED
THEIR ARRIVAL AT ISTANBUL AIRPORT AS PART OF THE TRANSIT
PASSENGER TRAFFIC WHICH, THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, IS LESS CARE-
FULLY CHECKED. THE SAME APPLIED TO THOSE WHO BOARDED THE AIR
FRANCE PLANE IN ATHENS--BUT THIS TIME, THESE TRANSIT
PASSENGERS WERE NOT SCHEDULED TO BOARD THE EL AL PLANE,
BUT TO ATTACK EL AL PASSENGERS IN THE TRANSIT LOUNGE."

4. HINTING THAT THE GOI MAY BE CONSIDERING TAKING SOME
ACTION AGAINST THE TERRORISTS, RABIN CONTINUED: "THE
LESSON WE SHALL CONTINUE TO APPLY IS THAT WE ARE ENGAGED IN
A LONG AND CONTINUOUS WAR, IN WHICH THERE ARE PHASES INVOLVING
DEFENSIVE MEASURES--AND WE SHALL HAVE TO INTENSIFY OFFENSIVE
ACTIVITIES AS WELL. AT THE SAME TIME, ONE MUST REALIZE THAT
WE ARE DEALING HERE WITH TERRORISTS WHO ARE TODAY ORGANIZED
IN CLANDESTINE UNDERGROUND MOVEMENTS. THE PROBLEM IS COMPLEX
AND COMPLICATED, AND WE WON'T SOLVE IT IN A DAY."

5. THE PRESS OFFICE BULLETIN ALSO CONTAINED A DESCRIPTION,
ATTRIBUTED TO AN IDF SPOKESMAN, OF THE PFLP AS PART OF THE
PLO AND LISTED 33 ATTACKS IT HAS CARRIED OUT SINCE 1968. A
COPY OF THIS STATEMENT HAS BEEN POUCHED TO NEA/IAI.
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6. HATZOFEH (NRP) WROTE ON AUGUST 12: "THE TERRORIST ATTACK
ON AN EL AL PLANE AT ISTANBUL AIRPORT CONFIRMS THE REPORTS
FROM RELIABLE SOURCES THAT THE TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS WERE
SCHEMING TO CARRY OUT ANOTHER HIJACKING AND MURDER ATTACK
FOLLOWING ENTEBBE. THEY CHOSE ISTANBUL--NOT PREVIOUSLY THE
SITE OF AN ATTACK BY ARAB TERRORISTS--IN ORDER TO EXPLOIT
THE SURPRISE ELEMENT. THE PLANE THAT BROUGHT IN THE TERRORISTS

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WAS PAKISTANI AND THEIR DEPARTURE BASE WAS TRIPOLI IN LIBYA, TO WHICH THEY INTENDED TO RETURN. YET PAKISTAN IS A UN MEMBER STATE WITH DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH MOST STATES OF THE WORLD, AND LIBYA HAS CLOSE TIES WITH BOTH WESTERN AND EASTERN STATES. AFTER THE ENTEBBE OPERATION DEMANDS WERE VOICED THAT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY UNITE TO COMBAT TERRORISM, SO FAR NO CONVINCING ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN TO WEED OUT THIS EVIL."

7. MAARIV (INDEPENDENT) FOCUSED ON THE REQUIREMENT FOR PREPAREDNESS: "UNFORTUNATELY, THERE IS VERY LITTLE THAT ISRAEL CAN DO TO PREVENT SUCH ATTACKS WHEN THEY HAPPEN IN FOREIGN AIRPORTS...AND THE LESSON TO BE LEARNED FROM THE ISTANBUL ATTACK IS A SIMPLE AND CLEAR ONE: ALERTNESS, WATCHFULNESS, PREPAREDNESS AT ALL TIMES, EVERYWHERE, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR US TO PREVENT TERRORISM ALTOGETHER, BUT IT IS OUR DUTY TO DO EVERYTHING IN OUR POWER TO REDUCE ITS THREAT AND DIMENSIONS TO A MINIMUM." YEDIOT AHRONOT (INDEPENDENT) CRITICIZED THE ROLE OF LIBYA: "THE FOCAL CENTER OF TERRORISM, WHETHER DIRECTED AT ISRAEL OR AT THE WORLD AS A WHOLE, IS QADHAFI, HELPED BY THE RUSSIANS. HIS IS THE BRAIN, THE FUNDS AND THE HAND BEHIND THE ATTACKS--FROM BELFAST TO SUDAN, GREECE AND TURKEY, WITH HABASH AS HIS ERRAND BOY."
TOON

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